

# Friends of the Hockanum River Linear Park of Vernon, Inc.



*21 Timber Lane, Vernon, Ct 06066*

To: Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee  
Senator John W. Fonfara  
Representative Jeffrey J. Berger

March 9, 2015

Re: Testimony SB 946 – Section 29, Elimination of Funding,  
Community Investment Act

The Friends of the Hockanum River Linear Park of Vernon, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to water quality enhancements of the Hockanum River through preservation of open space and creation of a greenway along the entire length of the river in Vernon.

Since 1996 our organization has worked to implement the master plan for the river park, creating a system of river trails for public enjoyment and exercise. The popular trails have become a regional attraction and an economic and healthful benefit to the community.

Availability of funding through the State's open space programs has been critical to the creation of the river park, providing the greenway protections for the Hockanum River, as well as the recreational benefits of public access to a cleaner waterway.

We strongly opposes the complete sweep of funding from the Community Investment Act. The Friends, and similar organizations across the state, need a RELIABLE source of funding to carry out our projects. Acquisition projects, especially, can be complicated and require quick action.

The passage of the Act in 2005 had a groundswell of community support because of its very structure: funds derived from Connecticut towns would be available to towns for specific purpose (open space, historic preservation, and affordable housing). To re-neg on that promise and now sweep the all of the funds into the General Fund erodes confidence in government, and sets a dangerous precedent.

Please reinstate funding for the Community Investment Act.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Board of Directors, Friends of the Hockanum River Linear Park of Vernon

Ginny Gingras, President  
Ann Letendre, Secretary/Treasurer  
George Arthur  
Don Bellingham  
Joe King

